

Nitrates and Flouride in Ground Water of Delhi

***408. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:**

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that TERI has reported that the ground water in Delhi contains dangerously high quantities of Nitrates and Flouride which is harmful to health; and

(b) if so, what action Government are taking to protect the people from this hazard?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN SETHI): (a) and (b) The Tata Energy and Research Institute (TERI) have not reported that "ground water in Delhi contains dangerously high quantities of nitrate and fluoride which is harmful to health". However, a joint study made by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) have reported the presence of high quantities of fluoride and nitrate in ground water of some parts of Alipur, Kanjhawala, Najafgarh, Shahdara and city blocks of Delhi.

Water being a State subject, provision of drinking water supply is the responsibility of the State Governments. The Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission has however been assisting and guiding the States in providing safe drinking water to rural areas under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and exclusive sub-mission programmes in areas having serious ground water quality problems like fluoride, iron arsenic and brackishness. In such areas where ground water is unfit for drinking, safe drinking water is provided through alternative sources, either by tapping surface water or by undertaking remedial measures like defluoridation, iron and arsenic removal. A total of 632 defluoridation plants, 150 desalination plants and 9524 iron removal plants have been installed at different places in various States.

The steps taken by the Union Government and the Delhi Jal Board to protect the people from this hazard include:

(i) The Delhi Jal Board produces about 640 Million Gallon/Day (MGD) water. Out of this 72 MGD (11.25%) is ground water

and the remaining 568 MGD (88.75%) is surface water. The surface water is treated in modern treatment plants. Out of 72 MDG ground water, 6 MGD water is treated at an ozonisation and nitrification plant at Okhla in South Delhi and the rest is supplied after chlorination.

- (ii) Works of rain water harvesting/recharging of aquifer have been taken up by the Delhi Jal Board individually and also through the Resident Welfare Associations under Bhagidari Scheme. The Delhi Jal Board has taken up 65 such projects.
- (iii) The project of prevention and control of fluorosis has been launched by the Delhi Government's Health Department.
- (iv) A 40 MDG water treatment plant has recently been commissioned at Nangloi and a 20 MDG plant is nearing completion at Bawana. These plants shall draw raw water from surface sources only for treatment.
- (v) The Central Ground Water Authority has declared Najafgarh and Mehrauli blocks of Delhi as notified areas for control and regulated development of ground water.
- (vi) The Delhi Jal Board has identified hand pumps and other structures in polluted areas where the shallow ground water is not fit for human consumption and painted them red with warning.
- (vii) The Central Ground Water Authority has organised mass awareness programmes among the public, industrialists and industrial workers regarding pollution and over-extraction of ground water.
- (viii) The Central Ground Water Board is periodically monitoring water quality for the NCT Delhi.